

Appin No. 10/729,150
Amdt. Dated September 23, 2004
Response to Office action of July 30, 2004

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BEST AVAILABLE COPY**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

The Office Action has been carefully considered. The issues raised are traversed and addressed below with reference to the relevant headings and paragraph numbers appearing under the Detailed Action of the Office Action.

"Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102"

Claim 1 of the present application has been amended to more clearly recite that the capping member is mounted directly on the support member. A basis for this amendment can be found on page 6 of the specification, and by example in Figures 10 to 12, wherein the re-capping mechanism or capping member 80 includes a sponge portion 81 and an elastomer strip 79, and the capping member is directly mounted on the arm or support member 78.

Thus, the Applicant respectfully submits that the new claim 1 is not anticipated by Hirano (JP02188259). In particular, the new claim 1 describes a capping member that is mounted directly on a support member, such that when the support member is in the operative position, the capping member engages the printhead to cap the printhead. In contrast to claim 1, Hirano describes a capping member attached to the recording head (as shown in Figure 3B), and not to the support plate.

Furthermore, Hirano describes that in a recording position, the cap member is boosted up, by an engaging piece at the tip of a boosting member (page 6, lines 25 to 26). Hence, claim 1 of the present invention is further distinguished from Hirano, as Hirano has the capping member attached to the recording head, and has the additional requirement of a boosting member.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 of the present application is not anticipated by the cited prior art, as the prior art does not describe the features of claim 1. Similarly, claims 2 to 7 are not anticipated by Hirano.

Additionally, the Applicant further submits that claims 6 and 7 are not obvious with respect to Hirano in view of Matsui (JP 0604160), and are thus patentable over the cited prior art. Matsui does not describe or suggest a capping member that is directly mounted on a support member, such that when the support member is in the operative position, the capping member engages the printhead to cap the printhead.

New claims 8 and 9 have also been added to the application, to describe the use of an elastomer strip, and an elastomer spring, respectively. A basis for these amendments can be found on page 6 of the specification.

In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the claim rejections have been successfully traversed and addressed. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the claims, and the application as a whole with these claims, are allowable, and favourable reconsideration is therefore earnestly solicited.

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It is respectfully submitted that all of the Examiner's objections have been successfully traversed. Accordingly, it is submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of the application are courteously solicited.

Very respectfully,

Applicant:



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